



Natural Resources Conservation Service
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70 Years
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July 26, 2005

MINNESOTA BULLETIN NO. 360-5-38

SUBJECT: PER-NRCS EMPLOYEES PARTICIPATION IN OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS

Purpose. To provide guidance and clarification of policy for employees to participate in activities, training, meetings, conferences other than NRCS.

Expiration date. September 30, 2006.

Effectively immediately, the following will define the procedure for approval of employees requesting participation in outside organizations events, but more importantly it establishes the criteria for determining: the approved amount/cost, on a percentage basis, of travel at government expense; and the approval of time spent while traveling as compensatory time and or credit leave.

Employees must submit to their supervisor, for approval, a Request for Travel Authorization form, MN-FNM-001, accompanied by either a Special Training Request form, MN-PER-025, and or the Registration form and agenda, for the event and or activity for which the employee is requesting to participate. The request must also have a justification for the employees participation (Forms MN-FNM-001 and MN-PER-025 provides space for justification). Requests approved by the supervisor will be forwarded through the SAO for final approval by the STC.

If approved by the STC; the STC will then determine the limit, amount/cost, per activity. The following criteria will be used for determining eligibility for attendance and allowable time and travel expense (Exceptions will only be granted by the STC on a case-by-case basis):

A. 100% - Official Time and Expense

1. Position as a National Officer
2. Position as a Regional Officer or Representative
3. Training or Conference Presenter
4. Member of Chief's Staff (STC)

B. Official Time and Expense Not to Exceed (NTE) 100% (Cost-effective limit will be set for each meeting by STC)

1. Direct and substantial job related training and approved in the Individual Development Plan (IDP)
2. Committee member of the outside organization
3. Meaningful role on agenda and or conducting the outside organization meeting (e.g., session, chair, facilitator, recorder)
4. State Chapter President or State Representative of the outside organization
5. As directed by the STC to attend (e.g. holding a NRCS Career Fair/Job Fair/Poster Presentation)

C. Time Only, Own Expense (100% Employee's)

All others requesting attendance not covered in A and B above

NRCS encourages selective attendance and participation by employees in career-related activities, professional organizations and training conference or courses that enhance career development and professionalism. However, unless specifically authorized by the STC, NRCS does not require employees to attend Outside Organization Meetings. Time spent traveling to and from outside organization meeting is not considered hours of work for overtime, compensatory time or accrual of credit leave.

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WILLIAM HUNT
State Conservationist

Attachment

DIST: MN-AE